the scope of the duties assigned by Mr. Churchill to such an appointment. They laid stress, however, on the importance of the appointment of someone who had the complete confidence of the War Cabinet.

The War Cabinet considered that the best available man would have to be appointed to this post, and that, in view of the paramount importance of the shipping situation, nothing should stand in the way of this appointment. There was a general agreement that, having regard to his record in this War, Major-General Sir Eric Geddes would be the most suitable person if he were willing to undertake the duties. The War Cabinet saw Major-General Geddes and invited him to accept the appointment. He promised to consider the matter and to reply as soon as possible.

The War Cabinet also felt that, having regard to the intimate connection between shipbuilding for the purposes of the Royal Navy, the Mercantile Marine and the War Office Inland Waterways, there should be a very close association between the holder of the new Office and the shipbuilding side of the Shipping Controller's Committee, and a proposal was made that the new Admiralty Civil Lord should exercise a measure of control over all three departments, as far as they were engaged in shipping construction, after the general policy had been laid down by the War Cabinet.

Sir Eric Geddes consented to undertake this work.

Accordingly, on nth May, 1917, I was able to report his acquiescence, and he was duly appointed.

The War Cabinet decided that on account of his proposed other duties at the Admiralty in connection with supplies of armament, etc., and on account of the complexity of naval design, it was necessary that his touch with the Admiralty should be very close, and